



RESOURCES FOR GROUPS

TITLE: Two Ways

TEXT: Matthew 7:13-29

DATE: March 28, 2021

SPEAKER: Pastor Justin Armstrong

COMMUNITY BUILDING:

- What is your favorite part of spring? Do you have any outside projects coming up that you're excited about?
- What is one special take-away you have from this study of the Sermon On The Mount?

CHRIST-CENTERED DISCUSSION:

Bold indicates zoom friendly OR to be used with spiritual growth partners. *Italicized green text is the leader guide.*

- **What are the characteristics of the narrow gate? What about the wide gate?**
- What sort of voices in our culture encourage you to pick the default easy path? Why is it so hard to pick the narrow gate?
Take note of the answers you hear to these questions. They will reveal the loudest voices in your group's lives. Look for commonalities and patterns.
- What are the characteristics of the people Jesus warns us about in verses 15 – 20 and verses 21 – 23?
The false prophets of v15 – 20 claim to speak for God, but lack fruit. They look like sheep on the narrow way, but really they are inwardly wolves out to distract and deter others. Those in v21-23 don't do the will of God and are not known by God. They look like Jesus-followers, but they aren't actually obeying. An example of this would be the hypocrites and Pharisees spoken of earlier in the Sermon on the Mount who appeared to be doing the right things, but weren't actually obeying.
- Discuss the various warnings Jesus presents in Matthew 7:13-27 and their implications. In light of these warnings and their seriousness, what hope does Matthew 7:7-11 give?
- Read Matthew 7:24-27. What does the wise man do? What are the results? Who is like a wise man who built his house upon the rock?
Don't miss this! It's everyone who hears these words and does them. This passage teaches that both the people on the wide way and the narrow way "hear" Jesus' words. What differentiates the ways is that those on the narrow way obey the words and, therefore, produce a true fruit.
- *Do you feel like you are in a season where the rain is falling, wind is blowing and your house is being beaten on? How does listening to AND obeying Jesus' teaching help you in such times?*
Emphasize the act of obedience in belief to prepare for and endure the stormy times for your group members. For example, in a storm of uncertainty and anxiety, building on the rock looks like claiming God's care & sovereignty & actually giving up your worry. It is not simply acknowledging God's care & sovereignty while continuing to entertain anxious thoughts & strive in your own strength to control the uncertain situation. Push your group members to think as concretely as possible about the actions their belief/trust in Jesus produce in their stormy areas.
- **How does Jesus show himself to be the gate to the narrow way? Which picture of Jesus is most helpful to you?**
Pastor Justin talked about several places in the gospels where it depicts Jesus as the gate, the sacrificial lamb, the true vine producing healthy fruit, and doing the will of the Father.
- Given the definitions of the two ways Pastor Justin talked about, which "way" are you on most often? Are you asking and seeking for God to help you find and stay on the narrow way (see Matthew 7:7-8)?

FAITHFULLY FOLLOWING:

- Individually or as a group, discuss how you will practically live out these truths this week. Pair up and pray for one another to "hear these words of mine and do them."
- The Joyful Journey resource page on our website has many Faithfully Following pieces.